



2014 SESSION REVIEW

State Representatives David Taylor & Bruce Chandler

15th Legislative District

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

For the first time since 2009, the state Legislature adjourned on time (March 13) with no plans for a special session. This is good news for taxpayers as special sessions cost money that could be put to better use. This year, we held the line on tax increases, kept the state budget in balance, and held in-state tuition rates at the state-run colleges and universities steady for another year.

This newsletter will serve to inform you about some of the issues we dealt with in Olympia on your behalf. If you have questions or other concerns to share with us, please call, send an e-mail or write a letter using the contact information and our legislative website addresses on this page.

We look forward to hearing from you.

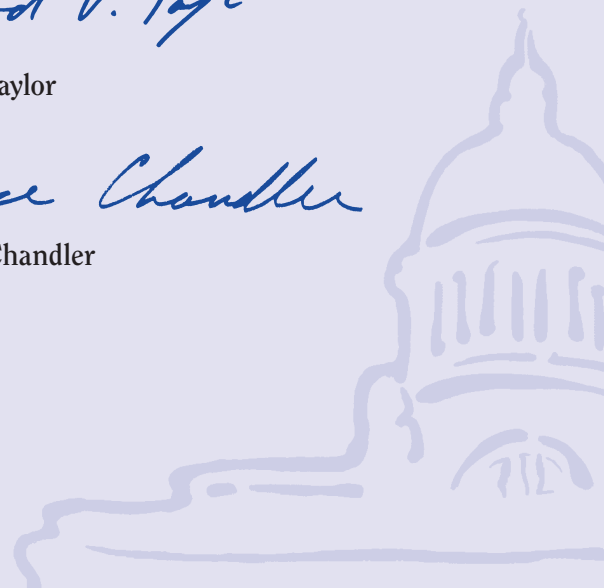
Sincerely,

Rep. David Taylor

Rep. Bruce Chandler

TOLL-FREE HOTLINE:

1-800-562-6000



15th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Representative David Taylor Representative Bruce Chandler

Legislature passes true supplemental budget



With Representative Chandler serving in his new role as ranking Republican on the House Appropriations Committee, the budget agreement this year was the first truly supplemental budget we've seen in years. The supplemental budget is NOT a time to rewrite the entire budget. It is specifically for addressing unforeseen circumstances in caseloads or revenue collections so that our budget remains balanced throughout the two-year biennium.

The 2014 supplemental budget increased spending by less than 0.23 percent, mostly for maintenance issues. It included a little more for education and the McCleary decision (\$58 million) and a little more for Opportunity Scholarships (\$25 million). It keeps our promise to college students by freezing tuition rates for the entire 2015 school year and keeps a little more in reserves (\$315 million) to protect against any downturn in our economy.

One of the most important aspects about the budget is that it is balanced out for four years! This is a new requirement and will help avoid the "budget roller coaster" of the past. This four-year budget requirement is an essential protection for taxpayers.

Holding the line on taxes



Many in Olympia continue to believe more government spending is the answer, no matter the question. Legislation from Democrats in both the House and Senate would have raised taxes on e-cigs (vaping), bottled water, prescription drugs, out-of-state residents and fuel refineries. However, we know you have had to do more with less and believe state government

should do the same. We worked to defeat these tax increases so that state government continues to live within its means.

Gas tax



There was also a big push to raise the gas tax this year by up to 11.5 cents per gallon. However, without serious reforms, we cannot support throwing more good money away to a transportation-construction system and a Washington State Department of Transportation that lacks accountability, transparency and a proven track record of on-time and on-

budget success.

We supported reforms to make transportation projects less costly, such as: keeping sales-tax revenues collected from transportation projects in the transportation budget; reducing unnecessary regulations that drive up costs; and keeping government-contracted wages under control through prevailing-wage reform.



Education

In contrast to the past 30 years, the focus in Olympia is now on prioritizing education in the state budget. We did so last year, and this year's supplemental budget continues that progress. Like you, we know that money alone will not

solve all of our state's education problems.

Students and parents benefit from continued freeze on tuition hikes

As a result of our efforts, the 2013 budget included a one-year "hard freeze" on tuition. In the second year, however, state-run colleges and universities had the authority to raise tuition.

To address this, we worked with Senate budget writers this year to put a hard freeze on tuition for a second year. Once again, House Democrats fought this move. They maintained the ability for institutions to raise tuition in their budget proposal. However, in the end, we held to our position and the "hard freeze" policy won out in negotiations. That means there will be no tuition increase in the upcoming 2014-15 school year!



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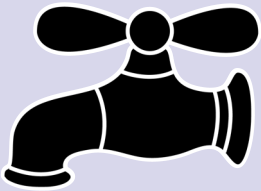


Jobs/Economy

Last November legislators were rushed back to Olympia for a whirlwind special session to vote on tax-incentive legislation to keep Boeing jobs in the Puget Sound region and provide millions of dollars in infrastructure. Unfortunately, we were unable to pass any tax-incentive proposals for other regions in the state that would have

created good, family-wage jobs.

Rep. Chandler's water bill...



This year, Rep. Chandler sponsored HB 2596 that would allow rural counties to purchase existing water rights with monies collected from sales and use taxes. In a radio interview, Chandler said:

"The implications surrounding our water management are so important – so vital to our future – that we need to engage in a vigorous discussion about what is the best path forward in managing Washington's water. I know the county commissioners in Yakima and other rural counties are looking for a tool to use to help them manage this most precious resource. My bill begins the dialogue on whether or not water banking is the right strategy for the future of water management for Washington state. If it is, should it be privately funded or publicly funded?"

The bill received a public hearing but died in the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.



The War on Jobs

In addition to several good ideas which were not adopted, there were a number of proposals introduced that would have weakened our state's economy and hurt job retention and creation, particularly for our smaller employers. There were proposals to:

- increase the minimum wage;
- require mandatory sick and safe leave;
- require mandatory vacation leave; and
- add or expand provisions related to Obamacare.



In a sluggish economy these kinds of bills simply add to the instability and uncertainty of our business climate. Fortunately, we were able to defeat these measures this session.

Rep. Taylor drone bill...

Perhaps no bill garnered more national attention this year than Rep. Taylor's "drone bill." House Bill 2789 was introduced to guarantee transparency and accountability in public agencies'



use of extraordinary surveillance technologies like drones equipped with high-powered cameras. The bill requires state and local governments to allow for public input before they acquire drones, and to allow public input into policies and procedures for the use of drones. It also requires detailed records and reports of drone use.

Instead of proving himself as a friend of open government, transparency, accountability and the protection of personal privacy, Gov. Jay Inslee vetoed the bill and convened a task force to study the issue.

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Election-year restrictions

We want you to know what is happening in Olympia, and how it affects you. However, this is an election year, and under the provisions of a 1992 law (created by Initiative 134) there are limits on what and when we can mail to you. After this newsletter, the soonest we can mail another is just before the 2015 session.

The initiative does permit us to respond to your direct requests for information, and we encourage you to write or call whenever you have a question or a comment to share on legislation or other matters.

Need a guest speaker?

If you belong to a club, civic group or community-service organization and would like a guest speaker at your next meeting or event, please contact our offices to arrange a convenient date. We're happy to report on the issues we dealt with during the 2014 session, or we can tailor our remarks to address particular areas of interest or concern.

